

Health screening - men age 65 and older

You should visit your health care provider regularly, even if you feel healthy. The purpose of these visits is to:

- Screen for medical issues
- Assess your risk of future medical problems
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle
- Update vaccinations
- Help you get to know your provider in case of an illness

Even if you feel fine, you should still see your health care provider for regular checkups. These visits can help you avoid problems in the future. For example, the only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to have it checked regularly. High blood sugar and high cholesterol levels also may not have any symptoms in the early stages. A simple blood test can check for these conditions.

There are specific times when you should see your provider. Below are screening guidelines for men age 65 and older.

ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM SCREENING

- If you are between ages 65 - 75 and have smoked, you should have an ultrasound to screen for abdominal aortic aneurysms.
- Other men should discuss this screening with their provider.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

- Have your blood pressure checked every year.
- If you have diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, or certain other conditions, you may need to be checked more often.

CHOLESTEROL SCREENING AND HEART DISEASE PREVENTION

- Your cholesterol should be checked every 5 years if levels are normal.
- If you have high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, or certain other conditions, you may need to be checked more often.

LUNG CANCER SCREENING

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends annual screening for lung cancer with low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) in adults until age 80 who:

- Have a 30 pack-year smoking history AND
- Currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years

COLON CANCER SCREENING

Until age 75, you should have one of the following screening tests:

- A stool test done every year
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 - 10 years, along with a stool guaiac test
- Colonoscopy every 10 years

You may need a colonoscopy more often if you have risk factors for colon cancer, such as:

- Ulcerative colitis
- A personal or family history of cancer of the colon or rectum
- A history of large growths called adenomas

DIABETES SCREENING

- If you are age 65 or older and in good health, you should be screened for diabetes every 3 years.
- If you are overweight and have other risk factors for diabetes, ask your doctor if you should be screened more often.

DENTAL EXAM

- Go to the dentist every year for an exam and cleaning.

EYE EXAM

- Have an eye exam every 1 - 2 years if you have vision problems or glaucoma risk.

HEARING TEST

- Have your hearing tested if you have symptoms of hearing loss.

IMMUNIZATIONS

- If you are age 65 or older, get a pneumococcal vaccine if you have never had one, or if it has been more than 5 years since you had the vaccine.
- You should get a flu shot each year.
- Get a tetanus-diphtheria booster every 10 years.
- You may get a shingles or herpes zoster vaccine after age 60.

OSTEOPOROSIS SCREENING

- If you have risk factors for osteoporosis, you should check with your provider about screening. Risk factors can include long-term steroid use, low body weight, smoking, heavy alcohol use, or a family history of osteoporosis.

PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING

- Talk to your provider about prostate cancer screening. The potential benefits of PSA testing have not been shown to outweigh the harms of testing and treatment.
- If screening is done, a PSA test is the best method.
- Routine prostate exam for men without symptoms is not recommended.

PHYSICAL EXAMS

- Have a yearly physical exam.
- Your provider will check your weight, height, and body mass index (BMI).

During the exam, your provider will ask you questions about:

- Your medicines and risk of interactions
- Alcohol and tobacco use
- Diet and exercise
- Safety, such as using a seat belt, or smoke alarms
- Depression